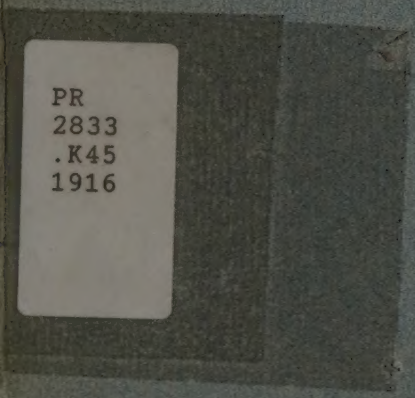
How Shakspere Came to Write the 'Tempest'

Introduction by
ASHLEY H. THORNDIKE



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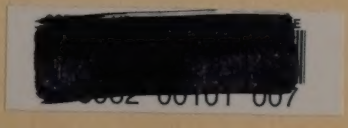

How Shakspere Came to Write the 'Tempest'

PUBLICATIONS

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IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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I How Shakspere Came to Write the 'Tempest'. By Rudyard Kipling. With an introduction by Ashley H. Thorndike.

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PAPERS ON PLAYMAKING

I

How Shakspere Came to Write the 'Tempest'

BY

RUDYARD KIPLING

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

ASHLEY H. THORNDIKE

Printed for the

Dramatic Museum of Columbia University
in the City of New York

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INTRODUCTION

MR. KIPLING'S brilliant reconstruction of the genesis of the 'Tempest' may remind us how often that play has excited the creative fancy of its readers. It has given rise to many imitations, adaptations, and sequels. Fletcher copied its storm, its desert island, and its woman who had never seen a man. Suckling borrowed its spirits. Davenant and Dryden added a man who had never seen a woman, a husband for Sycorax, and a sister for Caliban. Mr. Percy Mackaye has used its scene, mythology, and persons for his tercentenary Shaksperian Masque. Its suggestiveness has extended beyond the drama, and aroused moral allegories and disquisitions. Caliban has been elaborated as the Missing Link, and in the philosophical drama of Renan as the spirit of Democracy, and in Browning's poem as a satire on the anthropomorphic conception of Deity.

But apart from such commentaries by poets and philosophers, the poem has lived these

many generations in the imaginations of thousands. There, the enchanted island has multiplied and continued its existence. Shelley sang,

> Of a land far from ours
> Where music and moonlight and feeling are one.

Shakspere created that land as the possession of each of us. Not far removed, but close to the great continent of our daily routine and drudgery, lies this enchanted island where we may find music and moonlight and feeling, and also fun and mischief and wisdom. There, in tune with the melody and transfigured as by the charm of moonlight, we may encounter the nonsense of drunken clowns, the mingled greed and romance of primitive man, the elfishness of a child, the beauty of girlhood, and the benign philosophy of old age. We may leave the city at the close of business, and, if we avoid the snares of Caliban and Trinculo, we may sup with Prospero, Ariel, and Miranda.

How did Shakspere discover this enchanted island? From what materials did he create the "baseless fabric of this vision"? What had London playhouses to do with these spirits of thin air? On what books or

plays were these dreams made? Out of the issues of rivalry and profit which beset the King's company of players at the Globe and the Blackfriars, how came this "insubstantial pageant"? We have been told that the Sonnets are the key with which to unlock Shakspere's heart; and perhaps if we could answer all these questions we might have the key to his imagination. I do not believe, however, that his imagination was lockt up. Rather it was open wide to many impulses, hospitable to countless influences. This apparently is the opinion of Mr. Kipling, who suggests that Shakspere's "vision was woven from the most prosaic material, from nothing more promising, in fact, than the chatter of a half-tipsy sailor at the theater."

Mr. Kipling writes as one inventor of tales about another. Certainly no one is better qualified to trace out the processes of the creative imagination and to discover the very fabrics of its visions. In those marvelous stories of his, who has not recognized a Shaksperian catholicity in the quest of fact and a Shaksperian alchemy in its transformation? He has himself created many enchanted islands and he knows whereof they are

made. The sailor just home from a famous shipwreck on the Bermudas might have stept out of one of Mr. Kipling's tales; but he becomes a factor in some very acute criticism, for the sailor's "profligate abundance of detail at the beginning, when he was more or less sober, supplied and surely established the earth-basis of the play in accordance with the great law that a story to be truly miraculous must be ballasted with facts."

Mr. Kipling's letter has found a place in all subsequent critical discussions of the play, and has become a contribution to that historical research which seeks to discover the ways and means by which literature is made. It may not be unseemly therefore to bring together as an introduction and commentary some other suggestions that criticism has advanced in regard to the influences and incentives that directed Shakspere's art in this play, written at the very close of his career and at the moment when the Elizabethan drama had reached its highest development.

Recent investigation has added to our certainty that the play was written in 1610 or 1611, for Mr. Ernest Law has shown that the supposedly forged entry of its perform-

ance at court on November 1, 1611 is genuine. Various passages in the play indicate that it was not written before July 1610, when Sir Thomas Gates and his ships sailed up the Thames with news of the safety of the fleet that had departed from Plymouth over a year before. This fleet of nine vessels had started for the new colony in Virginia, had been scattered by a great storm, and the ship 'Sea Venture' with the leaders aboard, Sir George Somers, Sir Thomas Gates, and Captain Christopher Newport, had been cast ashore on one of the Bermudas. But there had been no loss of life; the adventurers had lived comfortably for many months, had built two pinnaces from the materials of the wreck, and had rejoined their comrades in Virginia. Before the arrival of Gates from Virginia, reports of the wreck had reached London, so his safe return was a nine days wonder. Full accounts were written. Two were printed in the autumn, and others circulated in manuscript. Shakspere certainly read some of the pamphlets recounting the strange experiences of the expedition, and he made some use of other voyagers' tales, as Raleigh's 'Discovery

of Guiana.' But he may have heard much more than he read in the common gossip of the day. Or, enter Mr. Kipling's sailor, "the original Stephano fresh from the seas and half-seas over."

From this original Stephano or from the voyagers' tales may have come some hints for Caliban. There were many strange accounts of cannibals and monsters. An earlier narrative tells of "a sea monster . . . arms like a man, without hair and at the elbows great fins like a fish." Indians had been brought back from America; and only a few years before the play several had been exhibited and aroused much curiosity. As Trinculo observes, "When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian." Caliban was doubtless intended to be of the earth, earthy, the opposite of Ariel, the spirit of the air, and was also intended as a sketch of the savage resisting the mastery of the European. But, brutish and savage though he be, he too is a dweller in the enchanted island. For him too life has its romance. There is no finer touch of Shakspere's magic in the whole play than this. Marco Polo had recounted that

"You shall heare in the ayre the sound of tabers and other instruments, to put the travellers in fear, &c., by evill spirits that make these sounds and also do call . . . travellers by their names." But Shakspere's Caliban reassures his companions frightened by Ariel playing on a tabor.

Be not afeard. The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices
That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that, when I wak'd,
I cried to dream again.

The enchanted island owes still more to preceding voyagers in the great seas of romance. Shakspere had made many earlier voyages thither, but he was not the first Columbus to search out the undiscovered lands of illusions and enchantments. Fortunately for us he lived in the period of imaginative adventure and steered his crafts on the oceans whence many predecessors had returned treasure-laden. This is no place to relate the various circumstances that placed the men of the sixteenth century in a fortu-

nate position for Romance, or to indicate the long development of romantic-comedy in which Shakspere played so great a part. But surely the interview between the dramatist and the sailor would have had very different results if the Elizabethan theater had not been accustomed to the union of the laughable and the romantic, the comic and the marvellous. Such a union is not a common one. There are no romantic-comedies in the literature of antiquity, and very few in modern literature since Shakspere's death. He found a stage that was already the home of romance, used to fantasy and medley, and used also to fill out a three hours entertainment with sentiment and fun, music and monsters, idealized heroines and puns.

Romance had found its readiest entrance to the stage thru the shows and spectacles which delighted the courts of the Tudors. Venus and Diana, or Loyalty and Sedition, or Red Cross Knight and Fairy Princess, or whoever else, if sumptuously arrayed and bejeweled and sufficiently attended, might be wheeled in on a huge car representing castle or garden or island, decorated with flowers and spangles, begin with a tableau and end

with a dance. Along with all this splendor, it would not be thought inappropriate to have a clown dance a jig or mimic the antics of a drunken man. Such spectacles soon became the joy of the public as well as of the court, and were imitated by many a rustic Holofernes or Bottom. Nymphs and fairies, the Nine Worthies, or the Golden Age might find representation by almost any village pedagog and his school children.

Out of such entertainments there soon develop a kind of comedy, at first the peculiar property of the children of the royal choirs who performed at court, but soon adapting itself to the adult companies and public theaters. This comedy availed itself of any stories that might come to hand, so they were strange, unusual, marvelous, impossible enough, and accompanied them with music, dancing, and spectacle, and with lively jests in the mouth of the smallest boys, dressed as pages.

Endymion in love with the moon, the judgment of Paris, Pandora and her varied actions under the seven planets, the rival magic of Friars Bacon and Bungay, Jack the Giant Killer, Alexander the Great in love with

Campaspe who preferred Apelles—these are some of the themes. Astrologers, Amazons, fairies, sirens, witches, ghosts, are some of the personages who appear along with the singing pages and Olympian deities. Of course, these persons and these marvels are impossible on any stage, most of all by daylight in the roofless public theaters of Shakspere's London. But neither audience nor dramatist thought of impossibility. They tried everything on their stage, even their wonderlands.

When Shakspere began to write plays, the stage was well used to romance. It was the comedies of Lyly and Greene, with their beautiful and unselfish maidens, their wonders and shows, their witty dialogs and jesters, their lovers' crosses and final happiness, their Utopias and fairies, which prepared the way for Shakspere's 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' and 'Love's Labor's Lost,' and for his great series of romantic plays from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' to 'Twelfth Night.' But by 1600, both dramatists and audiences had become somewhat sophisticated and tired of romance, and the theaters turned to plays of a different fashion, to tragedies that searched

the ways of crime and punishment, and to comedies that treated contemporary folly and vice with realism and satire. From the date of 'Twelfth Night,' 1601, to that of 'Cymbeline,' 1609, it is difficult to find a romantic-comedy on the London stage. There are no more marvels and magic, no charming princesses disguised as pages, no moonlit forests and terraces, no rescues and reconciliations, not much sentiment and no fun except what may be found on the seamy side of reality. Shakspere seems to have had little taste for satire and he wrote no satirical and realistic plays of the sort temporarily in fashion. But during these eight years, his comedies, like 'Measure for Measure,' have no romantic charm, and his energies are given to tragedy. He is occupied with the pomp and majesty of human hope and with the inevitable waste and failure of human achievement; but for his Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, Coriolanus and the rest, there were no forests of Arden and no enchanted islands. Like his associates, he seems to have forsaken romance.

What turned his imagination from tragedy back to romance? In my opinion it was the success of two brilliant young dramatists,

Beaumont and Fletcher, who, in a series of remarkable dramas made romance again popular on the London stage. Their romantic plays employ many of the old incidents and personages, but in general character differ strikingly from the plays of a decade or two earlier. They are hardly comedies at all, tho they have their humorous passages, but tragedies and tragi-comedies dealing with more thrilling circumstances and less naive wonderments than the earlier plays. Instead of a combination of romance and comedy, they aim at a contrast of the tragic and idyllic. They oppose a story of sexual passion with one of idealized sentiment, and delight in a succession of thrills as by clever stagecraft they hurry us from one suspense into another surprise. Until the very end you can scarcely guess whether it will be tragic or happy. Their land of romance is somewhat artificial and theatrical; but yet it has as of old its adventures, dangers, escapes, rescues, jealousies, suspicions, reconciliations and re-unions. And it has its idyls of forests, and fountains of love-lorn maidens and enraptured princes. It is a land of thrills and surprises, but also of idealization and poetry.

For in all that choir of poets who wrote for the London theaters there was no one except Shakspere who could excel these young dramatists in their power to turn the affairs and emotions of mankind into copious verse, now tumultuous, now placid, but always bubbling with fancy and flowing melodiously.

If Shakspere's mind was directed again to romantic themes and situations by the success of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, the clearest evidence of his indebtedness to them is to be found in his 'Cymbeline,' which has many marked similarities to their 'Philaster.' In his two plays which follow, the 'Winter's Tale' and the 'Tempest,' there is no detailed resemblance to the romantic tragic-comedies of the younger men. Shakspere, as well as they, had the whole tradition of romantic drama to draw from, and in particular he had his own past practice. He did not need to be shown how to depict romantic love, or charming heroines, or ardent suitors. For drinking scenes, like those of Trinculo and Stephano, or for dialog like that not very witty one of Gonzalo and the courtiers, he had many passages in his own plays that served as guides. Moreover, if 'Cymbeline' is an example of

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only partially successful experimentation with new methods, the 'Winter's Tale,' and still more, the 'Tempest,' seem to me triumphant and unguided excursions of his own in the new field. But I think that Shakspere was attracted to this field by contemporary stage-successes, and that in seeking for novel and invented plots, in the contrast of tragic and idyllic elements, in the unusual and rapidly shifting situations, in the loose and parenthetical style, and in the elaboration of the *dénouement,* he was adapting himself to the new formulas and fashions in which Beaumont and Fletcher were the leaders.

Still another suggestion came from the theater, but this time from the court. The court shows of the sort which we have noticed as characteristic of the early years of Elizabeth's reign had given place to a better ordered and more sumptuous spectacle, the Court Masque. Under James I, with the great architect Inigo Jones to devise the machines and setting, and with Ben Jonson to write the librettos, one of these masques was a magnificent affair. It was given on festal occasions at court and often cost thousands of pounds. It had but a single or at most two

performances, always at night, and it came to follow a distinct formula. The kernel of the show was the masked dance in which members of the court, even King and Queen, took part. This dance or "masque proper," often elaborated into several measures, came near the end of the show. As accompaniments there were (1) music, instrumental and vocal, (2) a play of some length, usually with mythological or allegorical motive, (3) various grotesque dances by professional performers, preceding the main masque and often integrated with the play, and (4) a spectacular stage-setting.

These shows were given in great halls, brilliantly lighted. The stage was splendidly decorated. Gods and goddesses floated among the clouds, and elaborate machines and scenes were devised. In one masque, a few years before the 'Tempest,' "an artificial sea was seen to shoot forth over the stage as it flowed to land, [this was the main machine—a great stage four feet high on trestles] on which was a great concave shell like mother of pearl" containing the masquers and conveyed by many sea-monsters hidden by the torch-bearers. The costumes

of the masquers were in brilliant colors and heavily jeweled. These were often bizarre; but Inigo Jones knew the monuments of classical antiquity and the artistic achievements of Renaissance Italy as well as Jonson knew classical and humanistic literature. The living pictures were often in richness and color no unworthy rivals of the frescoes with which Rubens had decorated the ceiling of the Masquing Hall.

Such expensive spectacles were beyond the reach of the professional theaters, but contemporary dramatists frequently found something that could be adapted or imitated for the public stage. So the antick dance of satyrs in a 'Winter's Tale' (three of whom are announced as having already appeared before the King) seems borrowed from an anti-masque in Ben Jonson's 'Masque of Oberon.' In two plays of nearly the same date there is a well defined effort to combine the masque and the regular drama into a distinctive and novel dramatic entertainment, in the 'Four Plays in One' of Beaumont and Fletcher and the 'Tempest' of Shakspere. The 'Tempest' has always been a spectacular play on the stage, and so it must have ap-

peared to him—and as a spectacle having many of the features of the court masque.

There is music and song. Ariel, Prospero, and even Caliban are proper figures for a court show. The "masque proper" is used to celebrate the betrothal in the fourth act. This is a simplified form of such a masque as would be given at court. There is evidently some machinery—it is the insubstantial pageant that calls forth Prospero's famous lines. Ariel, Iris, Ceres, and Juno appear, Juno descending from the heavens. There is music and a song, and Ferdinand cries:

> This is a most majestic vision, and
> Harmonious charmingly. May I be bold
> To think these spirits?

And when Prospero says they are spirits summoned by his art, Ferdinand exclaims

> Let me live here ever;
> So rare a wond'red father and a wise
> Makes this place Paradise.

It is not Miranda now, but the machine and costumes used in court-spectacles that turn the platform into a land of romance.

Then enter Nymphs, "Naiads of the winding brooks with sedg'd crowns," and Sun burnt Reapers, "with rye-straw hats." These are the main masquers and join in a graceful

dance, until upon Prospero's sudden start—"to a strange, hollow, and confused noise, they heavily vanish." More ingenious is Shakspere's use of the anti-masques—i.e. dances by professional performers drest in fantastic costumes as animals, satyrs, statues, witches, etc. Such are the several strange shapes of III.3, who first bring in the banquet and again enter "and dance with mocks and mows and carrying out the table"; and in IV,1, the divers spirits who "in shape of dogs and hounds" hunt about the drunken conspirators while Prospero and Ariel set them on.

For a stage, then, that had long been used to romance, Shakspere planned a new wonderment. For it he revived some of his old creations from Illyria and Arden, and Fairyland, all transformed by

> a sea change
> Into something rich and strange.

And he added some excitements and novelties to keep pace with the thrilling tragi-comedies of Beaumont and Fletcher. And just as years before, in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' he had drawn hints from the court entertainments by children, so now he con-

ceived a spectacle that—so far as was possible—might rival the great shows of the Jacobean court. He did not need to go beyond the drama to find abundant suggestions for his new venture.

But this was to be a play as well as a show, and must have some kind of plot. Perhaps he found an Italian novella with the story. No one has been able to find it since then. But stories somewhat similar to that of the 'Tempest' occur in a Spanish tale and in a German play. There was indeed a real Alfonso, king of Naples, and a duke of Milan who was dispossesst, and another named Prospero. But whatever story Shakspere found, it is my notion that he forgot most of it. The palace intrigues, the rivalries of the banisht and usurping dukes, set at naught by the love at first sight of their children, the perilous adventures, and the *dénouement* brought about by magic, were commonplaces of fiction. Shakspere wanted to weld them into a more surprising fable.

Perhaps it was at the very moment when he was most intent on this problem that the sailor from the fleet of Sir Thomas Gates hove into view. Even the mariner's ballast

of facts did not quite suffice. As Shakspere wrote he recalled some lines from his old favorite Ovid to fill out one of Prospero's descriptions; and he used the newly-read Montaigne for Gonzalo's account of a Utopian commonwealth. And some fine lines from Sir William Alexander's tragedy of 'Darius' seem to have lingered in his recollection when he wrote of the great globe which is like a pageant and life that is like a dream. As he wrote of Prospero he thought too of his own career, of his own so potent art, of his promised retirement, and the fading pageants of both life and art.

Perhaps, too, he may have thought of some of his battles of wit with Ben Jonson in the Mermaid Tavern. Ben was a great stickler for the rules, though he lamented that the Unity of Time was very difficult to secure on the English stage. He thought masques should be kept distinct from comedies, and he had no liking for fantastic medleys. Indeed, a few years later he indulged in a scoff at Shakspere's "servant-monster" and at "those who beget tales, tempests, and such like drolleries." Shakspere, recalling some such discussion may have said to himself, "Well, here

is a play as fantastic as possible, and just to show Benjamin what can be done, I will keep it in strict accord with his classical Unities of Time and Place." For this or some other propose he was for once at great pains to keep all the action within the time of the stage-performance, tho in doing so he makes his one nautical error by forgetting that the seaman's measure of time was a half-hour glass. When Prospero first consults Ariel we are precisely told that it is two o'clock in the afternoon, and just before the end of the drama we are told that three hours have elapst.

It has taken me too long to enumerate some of the materials in addition to those of Mr. Kipling's sailor with which Shakspere's fantasy worked. I hope I may have suggested that almost always, as here in this extraordinary flight of his imagination, he was writing as a playwright and not without full use of the hints and opportunities which the contemporary theater afforded. And I should like to suggest also that to the playwrights of that theater there were open many and great opportunities. Sailors home from a new world might cross the threshold of the

dramatist; and dramatists then could think of magicians and monsters and fairies, of goddesses and drunken boors, of ideal commonwealths, the three unities, and beautiful verse, all in terms of the stage. Thru some such processes as have been rehearst, by some such influences, Shakspere's imagination must have been led to the construction of a spectacular play that would win applause both in the Blackfriars playhouse and at court. Perhaps it is out of such varied driftwood that all enchanted islands are created.

Ashley H. Thorndike.

(April 23, 1916).

How Shakspere Came to Write the 'Tempest'

How Shakspere Came to Write the 'Tempest'

To the Editor of the Spectator.

SIR:—Your article on 'Landscape and Literature in the *Spectator* of June 18th has the following, among other suggestive passages:—"But whence came the vision of the enchanted island in the 'Tempest'? It had no existence in Shakspere's world, but was woven out of such stuff as dreams are made of."

May I cite Malone's suggestion connecting the play with the casting away of Sir George Somers on the island of Bermuda in 1609; and further may I be allowed to say how it seems to me possible that the vision was woven from the most prosaic material—from nothing more promising in fact, than the chatter of a half-tipsy sailor at a theater? Thus:

A stage-manager, who writes and vamps plays, moving among his audience, overhears

a mariner discoursing to his neighbor of a grievous wreck, and of the behavior of the passengers, for whom all sailors have ever entertained a natural contempt. He describes, with the wealth of detail peculiar to sailors, measures taken to claw the ship off a lee-shore, how helm and sails were workt, what the passengers did and what he said. One pungent phrase—to be rendered later into:

'What care these brawlers for the name of King?'

—strikes the manager's ear, and he stands behind the talkers. Perhaps only one-tenth of the earnestly delivered, hand-on-shoulder sea talk was actually used of all that was automatically and unconsciously stored by the island man who knew all inland arts and crafts. Nor is it too fanciful to imagine a half-turn to the second listener as the mariner, banning his luck as mariners will, says there are those who would not give a doit to a poor man while they will lay out ten to see a raree-show,—a dead Indian. Were he in foreign parts, as he now is in England, he could show people something in the way of strange fish. Is it to consider too curiously

to see a drink ensue on this hint (the manager dealt but little in his plays with the sea at first hand, and his instinct for new words would have been waked by what he had already caught), and with the drink a sailor's minute description of how he went across the reefs to the island of his calamity,—or islands rather, for there were many? Some you could almost carry away in your pocket. They were sown broadcast like—like the nutshells on the stage there.

"Many islands, in truth," says the manager patiently, and afterwards his Sebastian says to Antonio:

I think he will carry the island home in his pocket and give it to his son for an apple.

To which Antonio answers:

And sowing the kernels of it in the sea, bring forth more islands.

"But what was the island like?" says the manager. The sailor tries to explain. "It was green, with yellow in it; a tawny-colored country"—the color, that is to say, of the coral-beached, cedar-covered Bermuda of today—"and the air made one sleepy, and the place was full of noises"—the muttering and roaring of the sea among the islands and be-

tween the reefs—"and there was a sou'-west wind that blistered one all over." The Elizabethan mariner would not discriminate finely between blisters and prickly heat; but the Bermudian of to-day will tell you that the sou'-west or Lighthouse wind in summer brings that plague and general discomfort. That the coral rock, battered by the sea, rings hollow with strange sounds, answered by the winds in the little cramped valleys, is a matter of common knowledge.

The man, refresht with some drink, then describes the geography of his landing place, —the spot where Trinculo makes his first appearance. He insists and reinsists on details which to him at one time meant life or death, and the manager follows attentively. He can give his audience no more than a few hangings and a placard for scenery, but that his lines shall lift them beyond that bare show to the place he would have them, the manager needs for himself the clearest possible understanding,—the most ample detail. He must see the scene in the round—solid—ere he peoples it. Much, doubtless, he discarded, but so closely did he keep to his original informations that those who go to-day to a

certain beach some two miles from Hamilton will find the stage set for Act ii, Scene 2 of the 'Tempest,'—a bare beach, with the wind singing through the scrub at the land's edge, a gap in the reefs wide enough for the passage of Stephano's butt of sack, and (these eyes have seen it) a cave in the coral within easy reach of the tide, whereto such a butt might be conveniently rolled.

(My cellar is in a rock by the seaside where my wine is hid).

There is no other cave for some two miles.

Here's neither bush nor shrub; one is exposed to the wrath of "'yond" same black cloud," and here the currents strand wreckage. It was so well done that, after three hundred years, a stray tripper and no Shakspere scholar, recognized in a flash that old first set of all.

So far good. Up to this point the manager has gained little except some suggestions for an opening scene, and some notion of an uncanny island. The mariner (one cannot believe that Shakspere was mean in these little things) is dipping to a deeper drunkenness. Suddenly he launches into a preposterous tale of himself and his fellows, flung

ashore, separated from their officers, horribly afraid of the devil-haunted beach of noises, with their heads full of the fumes of broacht liquor. One castaway was found hiding under the ribs of a dead whale which smelt abominably. They hauled him out by the legs—he mistook them for imps—and gave him drink. And now, discipline being melted, they would strike out for themselves, defy their officers, and take possession of the island. The narrator's mates in this enterprise were probably described as fools. He was the only sober man in the company.

So they went inland, faring badly as they staggered up and down this pestilent country. They were prickt with palmettoes, and the cedar branches raspt their faces. Then they found and stole some of their officers' clothes which were hanging up to dry. But presently they fell into a swamp, and, what was worse, into the hands of their officers; and the great expedition ended in muck and mire. Truly an island bewicht. Else why their cramps and sickness? Sack never made a man more than reasonably drunk. He was prepared to answer for unlimited sack; but

what befell his stomach and head was the purest magic that honest man ever met.

A drunken sailor of to-day wandering about Bermuda would probably sympathize with him; and to-day, as then, if one takes the easiest inland road from Trinculo's beach, near Hamilton, the path that a drunken man would infallibly follow, it ends abruptly in swamp. The one point that our mariner did not dwell upon was that he and the others were suffering from acute alcoholism combined with the effects of nerve-shattering peril and exposure. Hence the magic. That a wizard should control such an island was demanded by the beliefs of all seafarers of that date.

Accept this theory, and you will concede that the 'Tempest' came to the manager sanely and normally in the course of his daily life. He may have been casting about for a new play; he may have purposed to vamp an old one—say, 'Aurelio and Isabella'; or he may have been merely waiting on his demon. But it is all Prospero's wealth against Caliban's pignuts that to him in a receptive hour, sent by heaven, entered the original Stephano fresh from the seas and half-seas over. To

him Stephano told his tale all in one piece, a two hours' discourse of most glorious absurdities. His profligate abundance of detail at the beginning, when he was more or less sober, supplied and surely establisht the earth-basis of the play in accordance with the great law that a story to be truly miraculous must be ballasted with facts. His maunderings of magic and incomprehensible ambushes, when he was without reservation drunk (and this is just the time when a lesser-minded man than Shakspere would have paid the reckoning and turned him out) suggested to the manager the peculiar note of its supernatural mechanism.

Truly it was a dream, but that there may be no doubt of its source or of his obligation, Shakspere has also made the dreamer immortal.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

NOTES

NOTES

MR. KIPLING'S letter was originally publisht in the (London) *Spectator* for July 2, 1898. He allowed it to appear as his contribution to 'A Book of Homage to Shakspere' (Oxford University Press, 1916, pp. 200-203). But he has not yet included it in any collection of his miscellaneous writings; and for his permission to reprint it in this series the Committee in charge of the Dramatic Museum desires to express its thanks.

Malone's suggestion was presented in his essay, 'An Account of the Incidents from which the Title and a Part of the Story of Shakspere's "Tempest" were derived; and its true date ascertained.' This was privately printed in 1808 and supplemented by an additional pamphlet in 1809. Both were reprinted in volume XV of the Boswell-Malone Variorum edition of Shakspere in 1821. Malone's essay gives a careful analysis of the several contemporary accounts of the shipwreck of Sir George Somers, and of their relations to the 'Tempest.' In his preface Malone states that his 'Account' was written "some years ago" but acknowledges that his discovery had been anticipated by Douce in his 'Illustrations of Shakspere' published in 1807.

In his little book, 'Shakspere's Sea Forms Explained,' (Bristol, 1910) Mr. W. B. Whall, master mariner, expresses his belief that Shakspere's use of sea phrases is copious and accurate. He declares that "Words and phrases of an extremely technical nature are scattered thru" Shakspere's plays; "and a mistake in their use is never made." Then he asks: "Could a mere lubber have steered clear of error in the use of such terms?" (p. 6). Mr. Whall had earlier noted that there are seven years of Shakspere's life as to which we have scarcely any information, and that one of these years was the year of the Armada, 1588, when he had only just attained his majority. Where was Shakspere and what was he doing? "There was a hot press for men to man the fleet. Is it possible that he was among the prest?" (p. 5).

It was a time of exaltation of all things pertaining to sea things; and it is no wonder that the playwrights of the day, Heywood for one, made frequent use of sea words. "The wonder is that without professional acquaintance" Shakspere "should always use these terms correctly," (p. 18). He abounds in "Elizabethan sailor talk pure and simple." And a little later Mr. Whall draws attention to the fact that "sea expressions crop up in quite unexpected places"—just as theatrical expressions crop up; "and that they are all

phrased *as by a sailor,"* (p. 19). Then Mr. Whall quotes a remark from another master mariner, Captain Basil Hall, who had earlier noticed this striking characteristic: "One would like to know how Shakspere pickt it up."

When he comes to deal with the 'Tempest' Mr. Whall cites the saying of Lord Mulgrave, some time first Lord of the Admiralty: "The first scene of the 'Tempest' is a very striking instance of the great accuracy of Shakspere's knowledge in a professional science." With this Mr. Whall disagrees: "Now this does not of necessity follow. A playwright with any sense would, if about to write such a scene, obtain professional assistance unless he himself had professional knowledge to steer clear of error. The whole scene is graphic, accurate and correct in the terms of nautical speech. . . . But it is by no means such a proof of the writer's sea knowledge as are the scattered and wholly unexpected nautical references in many other plays, every one of which might have been written by an experienced seaman."

The most recent and the most careful consideration of Shakspere's acquaintance with seafaring life is contained in Mr. L. G. Carr Laughton's essay on 'The Navy: Ships and Sailors,' contributed to 'Shakspere's England,' (Oxford University Press, 1916), 141-170. A. H. T.

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